
Production, Planning, and Expediting Clerks

(0*NET 43-5061.00)

Nature of the Work

Production, planning, and expediting clerks coordinate and expedite the flow of information, work, and materials within or among offices. Most of their work is done according to production, work, or shipment schedules that are devised by supervisors who determine work progress and completion dates. Production, planning, and expediting clerks compile reports on the progress of work and on production problems. They also may schedule workers, estimate costs, schedule the shipment of parts, keep an inventory of materials, inspect and assemble materials, and write special orders for services and merchandise. In addition, they may route and deliver parts to ensure that production quotas are met and that merchandise is delivered on the date promised.

Production and planning clerks compile records and reports on various aspects of production, such as materials and parts used, products produced, machine and instrument readings, and frequency of defects. These workers prepare work tickets or other production guides and distribute them to other workers. Production and planning clerks coordinate, schedule, monitor, and chart production and its progress, either manually or with electronic equipment. They also gather information from customers' orders or other specifications and use the information to prepare a detailed production sheet that serves as a guide in assembling or manufacturing the product.

Expediting clerks contact vendors and shippers to ensure that merchandise, supplies, and equipment are forwarded on the specified shipping dates. They communicate with transportation companies to prevent delays in transit, and they may arrange for the distribution of materials upon their arrival. They may even visit work areas of vendors and shippers to check the status of orders. Expediting clerks locate and distribute materials to specified production areas. They may inspect products for quality and quantity to ensure their adherence to specifications. They also keep a chronological list of due dates and may move work that does not meet the production schedule to the front of the list.

Employment

In 2002, production, planning, and expediting clerks held 288,000 jobs. Jobs in manufacturing made up 45 percent. Another 13 percent were in wholesale and retail trade establishments.

Job Outlook

Employment of production, planning, and expediting clerks is expected to grow about as fast as the average for all occupations through 2012. As increasing pressure is put on firms to manufacture and deliver their goods more quickly and efficiently, the need for production, planning, and expediting clerks will grow. The work of production, planning, and expediting clerks is less likely to be automated than the work of many other administrative support occupations. In addition to openings due to employment growth, job openings will arise from the need to replace production, planning, and expediting clerks who leave the labor force or transfer to other occupations.

Related Occupations

Other workers who coordinate the flow of information to assist the production process include cargo and freight agents; shipping, receiving, and traffic clerks; stock clerks and order fillers; and weighers, measurers, checkers, and samplers, recordkeeping.



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Sources of Additional Information

Information about job opportunities may be obtained from local employers and local offices of the State employment service.

(See the introduction to the section on material-recording, -scheduling, -dispatching, and -distributing occupations for information on working conditions, training requirements, and earnings.)